

# The Widow's Mite

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Fall/Winter 2010

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## Our Mission

To serve Christ through His Church by praying for priests and others in Church leadership, to be devoted to the Blessed Sacrament and to promote Adoration of Christ in the Eucharist.



Above is a picture of Widows of Prayer who were able to attend the retreat held Sept. 10-12 at Monte Alverno Retreat & Spirituality Center.

The annual business meeting and retreat were held at the Monte Alverno Retreat Center in Appleton, WI on September 10-12. A Chapter



Fr. Tom Farrell stopped at Monte Alverno to say "Hello" to the Widows of Prayer attending the retreat, and had his picture taken with those who had made promises at the mass that day.

Above are those who made promises, along with the leaders of their particular community who witnessed their promises.



Above is Joan Lee wp making her first promise during a mass at St. Clare's Church in Wind Lake, WI on October 6th. Mary Ellen Morrow wp, Servant Leader of the Wind Lake Community of Widows of prayer and Fr. Paul Kelly from Sacred Heart Seminary at Hales Corners are witnessing Joan's promise.

A reception was held in the church hall after mass and Fr. Paul Kelly shared with the Widows of Prayer from Milwaukee/Franklin, Appleton and Wind Lake who attended.

## 2010 Retreat – Monte Alverno

meeting for the Widows of Prayer was held on Friday, Sept. 10 to go over additions and changes that they would like to see. The eligible local communities have elected and appointed the following Widows of Prayer to represent them on the General Council.

**Appleton, WI (community)**  
Joyce Baldwin, WP

**Hunting, IN (community)**  
Mae Leedy, WP

**Fort Wayne, IN (1-community)**  
Mary Lou Sohn, WP

**Fort Wayne, IN (2-community)**  
Mary Voors, WP

**Franklin/Milwaukee, WI (community)**  
Helen Krueger, WP

**Menominee, MI (community)**  
Gina Vincent, WP

**Wind Lake, WI (community)**  
Mary Ellen Morrow, WP

A total of 26 women who are Widows of Prayer attended the two-day retreat. In addition, 8 non-members attended the retreat.

## Making Promises

In dedicating their lives to God and the Widows of Prayer ministry, our widows must make three promises, each a year apart. When the third promise is made they become fully installed into the ministry. Our widows vow to live a life of prayer, chastity and to be chaste. Their prayers are for our priests and church leadership and for the special intentions of our Holy Father. They attend mass daily, pray the rosary, pray morning and evening Liturgy of the Hours; attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and other prayers for God's church and his priests.

### Promises Made at 2010 Retreat:

Our widows that made promises during our 2010 Retreat at Monte Alverno Retreat Center in Appleton, WI on September 12 were:

#### 1st Promise:

Judy Keefe – Chicago, IL

#### 2nd Promise:

Joanne Aird – Wind Lake, WI  
Bev Poquette – Menominee, MI  
Mary Troutner – Fort Wayne, IN  
Mary Ybarra – Fort Wayne, IN  
Gina Vincent – Menominee, MI

#### 3rd Promise:

Mary Ann Seidl – Menominee, MI

### Wind Lake, Wisconsin Promise:

On October 6, 2010, Joan Lee from Muskego, WI made her 1st promise to

becoming a Widow of Prayer at St. Clare's Catholic Church, Wind Lake, WI. Fr. Paul Kelly, Spiritual Advisor, said Mass and witnessed her promise. Joan Lee was presented by Mary Ellen Morrow, Servant Leader for the Wind Lake area. Everyone gathered into the reception area following mass.

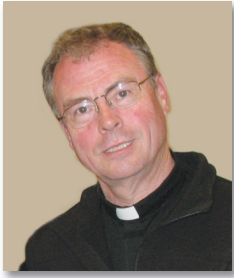
### Appleton, Wisconsin Promise:

Carlotta Stricker was installed into the Widows of Prayer on November 14 at the 10:30 am mass at St. Pius X Catholic Church. Fr. Tom Farrell, Spiritual Advisor, conducted the mass and 1st promise. Special guests attended the installation along with area Widows of Prayer and three Widows of Prayer from the Milwaukee area. Reserved seating in front of church was set aside for them. Mass was followed by fellowship.



Left to right: Carlotta Stricker wp; Fr. Tom Farrell, General Spiritual Advisor of the Widows of Prayer and Mary Reardon wp, General Servant Leader of the Widows of Prayer.





## Jesus Gave Himself to us

I recently was given the Book: "Mary and The priestly Ministry," by Fr. Emile Neubert, SM. The reason I chose to reflect on the writings of this book in "The Widows Mite," is not only because of the Widow's great love for priests, but also for their sanctification as we are all looking for ways in which we can find ourselves being drawn more closely to Jesus. In his book, Fr. Neubert not only speaks about prayer, but he also speaks about the importance of simply meditating before the Blessed Sacrament as he strongly emphasizes:

*"Experience, has shown that a mere half hour of intimate union with Jesus – brings about greater progress in humility and patience ... than ten hours of intellectual reflection on these virtues."*

He also speaks about the importance of entering into this union with Jesus' mother Mary as he quotes St. Pius X, from his encyclical:

*Ad Diem Illium:*

*"Since it has pleased eternal Providence to give us the God-Man, through the Blessed Virgin, and since she, having been made fruitful by the Holy Spirit formed Him in her womb – what is more natural for us – than to receive Christ from the hands of Mary?"*

Fr. Neubert reminds us that no one knows Jesus better than Mary. If we go to Jesus through His mother, our union with Jesus will become an even greater union because "it is a union that is more trusting, more loving, more intimate, and as a result more efficacious" He also tells us:

*"A heart to heart encounter is most easily acquired through Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament."*

He emphasizes that going before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, is not a time spent *"speaking about Jesus,"* but it is time *"speaking to Jesus."*

Though his book is written primarily for priests, his encouragement for growing in prayer and in love for God can be adapted by anyone. The following is an excerpt from his book as he calls upon God in prayer.

*"I listen to Him, I revere Him, I love Him, I submit to His request.*

*I make acts of faith in what He has told me – slowly and deliberately – so that His thought, His Love, and His desire – can penetrate – to the very core of my soul.*

*I ask Him for the grace to believe more firmly and more realistically.*

*I ask for the grace to express my appreciation, my gratitude, and my desire to make His dispositions my own.*

*I ask for the grace to acknowledge my weakness, my insufficiency, my fears, and my confidence.*

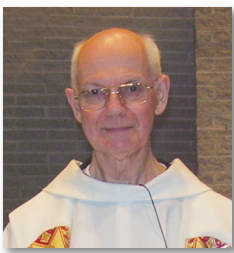
*I ask that He will make me strong with His strength, make me humble with His humility, and make me patient with His patience.*

*Meditation is not a torrent of chatter. Sentences are rare; only a few seemingly unconnected words: "Jesus, I believe! Jesus, mercy! Jesus, I thank You! Have Pity! Help me! Often it is only His Name. Thoughts are not expressed He understands. Sometimes there is only a silence of admiration and love, a silence to listen and to hear what He might have to say:"*

After reflecting on these words, I thought how beautiful, but also how far I have to go to grow in my own prayer life. Fr. Neubert tells us that Mary is always present during our prayer, and that just as she pondered on many things in her heart, you and I are called to ponder on many things in our hearts as we seek to understand God's desire for us. **God calls into community** so we can help each other grow closer to Him.

**The Widows of Prayer are a community of women** called to serve God through a ministry of prayer. **Mary was also a Widow of Prayer** who invites you to observe and listen to her son – as closely as she had.

*Sincerely in Our Eucharistic Lord,*  
Fr. Tom Farrell  
General Spiritual Advisor,  
Widows of Prayer



## A Vocation of Prayer

These days, we experience the lack of priestly vocations and we are reminded of Matthew 9:37-

38 where Jesus said; "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; ask the Master of the harvest to send laborers for his harvest." Those words fit well for our modern experience. Few enter a vocation and many are lost to the Church. What are we to do about it?

All of us who choose to serve the Lord in a religious group are workers in the harvest. In fact, all who are serious

about their faith are called to be shepherds of the Lord, as parents, teachers, special prayer people, or members of a religious group. The more people there are who take their religion seriously, the more priestly and religious vocations will be engendered.

Lately, I was talking to a bishop who has Widows of Prayer in his diocese and he told me that they are the best thing that has happened to his diocese. Since their coming, vocations to the priesthood have increased greatly. Ladies, be aware of your spiritual power in the Church, not just because you pray for vocations but because you yourselves have entered a vocation of prayer. Through your

vocation, you are no longer just widows but the Lord's widows. And the Lord will take your prayers seriously. You have a large part to play in the movement of grace that will revitalize the Church.

I have read somewhere that the parents of a priest will never be lost but will surely be welcomed into Heaven. That goes also for those who support priestly vocations by their prayers and encouragement.

Widows of Prayer, believe in the importance of your vocation! Pray seriously for priests and those contemplating priesthood and you will truly become spiritually rich.

*Fr. John Guimond, OFM Cap.*

# Widows of Prayer 2010 Retreat Weekend

By: Bernadine M. Ziemba, WP

Many people have a favorite time of the year. For me, the weekend after Labor Day is right up there with Easter and Christmas. This is the weekend the Widows of Prayer gather at Monte Alverno in Appleton, Wisconsin for our Annual Chapter Meeting and Women's Retreat Weekend. Friendships are renewed. New friends are made. Business is discussed and voted upon to further the cause of Widows of Prayer.

On Thursday, those of us from out of town traveled to join the Appleton Chapter for Adoration, Benediction, and Mass at St. Pius X Parish. A meal at Mary's Restaurant is always enjoyed by one and all. This evening and Friday between meetings is a good time to catch up on the latest news of our widow friends and their families.

Our spiritual life was once again enhanced this weekend through private prayer, Liturgy of the Hours, Celebration of the Eucharist, Adoration, Sacrament of Reconciliation, Conferences, Healing service and the Rosary. Annual Promises were made. Misty eyes were seen. The making of a promise can be an emotional event when a person knows this is the right commitment for them in life. God has called us to be Widows of Prayer and to be of service to the church and therefore to each other as "tabernacles of Christ."

At Friday's meeting we discussed business and elected officers: Mary Reardon (General Servant Leader), Catherine Fitzgerald (Assistant General Servant Leader) Ann Ehnerd (General Secretary/Treasurer). We

also shared ideas of how to be supportive of priests and what are future possibilities for our group.

On Friday evening, our retreat began. The theme, "When the Going Gets Tough: Franciscan Helps for the Journey" proved to be an appropriate title for the weekend. Originally Rev. Roch Niemier OFM was to direct this retreat, but he became seriously ill. Plan B was for the staff of Monte Alverno to direct this retreat. Enter problem #2: Staff member Sr. Marlene became ill and spent our retreat weekend in the hospital. Fr. Keith Clark substituted for her and discussed with us his new findings of St. Francis and St. Clare. We were all grateful Brother John was better and could share the weekend with us.

## A New Journey By: Carlotta Stricker, WP

Everything has a cause and effect. I never thought that one day I could become a "widow."

It goes without saying that more husbands leave this earthly world before their wives. Statistics show that most husbands are generally three years older than their spouse. My husband was six years older than me.

Somewhere in back of my brain I knew that we would ultimately part because of death. But that isn't something a person focuses on, not yet anyway. Because my husband had great family genetics and longevity, I was sure that we would have another twenty years together before I would have to face death's reality. Maybe never, I might go first!

This was not to be. My husband died twelve months ago at far too young an age of 67. I thought I had more time with him. I was not mentally or emotionally prepared for what happened. I was alone after 43 years of marriage and even my five children's presence could not change that. Through the tears I asked God, "What am I going to do now? What is next for me?" Then my prayers were answered.

Two weeks after the funeral I received an invitation from Widows of Prayer to attend their mass to honor my husband and other Catholic husbands who'd recently died. I read the word "widow" and it was the first

time I realized what my status was. I still thought of myself as being married. But the sad truth was, I was a widow.

Both my husband and I would joke that we would never remarry should anything happen to the other. We would make remarks like; "can you imagine having to get used to someone else's habits again?" Never! Reality can change one's perception. But in my case, it has not. I will never marry again.

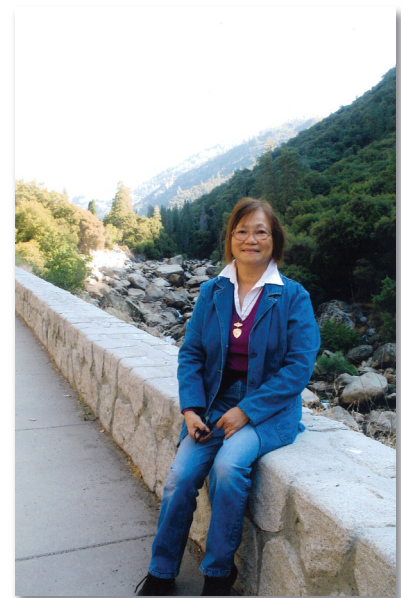
I had always had a strong faith and functioned within other church lay ministries: catechist, communion distributor, President of the Altar and Rosary Society, Chairman of the Worship Committee. But always asking; "God, there must be more that I can do?" There was/is – The Widows of Prayer!

I was so amazed and humbled by their ministry, praying for priests and other Catholic leaders, Adoration of the Eucharist. How wonderful! There are many widows and each can make a difference through prayer.

I am walking down a new path, not with my husband, but with God. So in dedicating my life to God I am making a small difference as well as honoring my husband and our marriage. I am on my way to making my first promise. I am beginning to smile again and the tears are less. HOW AMAZING GOD IS!!



Fr. Mark Brandl held an afternoon of reflection for the Franklin/Milwaukee and Wind Lake Widows of Prayer at St. Alphonsus Church on Sept. 25th, beginning at noon and ending with the 5 p.m. mass.



Cecilia Skrzypek, wp shared this photo taken by the banks of Merced River in Yosemite, California.

A Widow of Prayer continues to praise God in His creation and enjoys the gift of beauty in her surroundings, offering all in Thanksgiving.

## The Immaculate Heart of Mary

Simeon said to Mary "A sword shall pierce your heart." Of course he meant the Passion and Death of her Son Jesus. How many people throughout the years in a sense have pierced Mary and Jesus's Heart. It will be done to the end of time. All we can do is Pray for all mankind to open their hearts to Jesus and Mary; so all will know how much they love us.

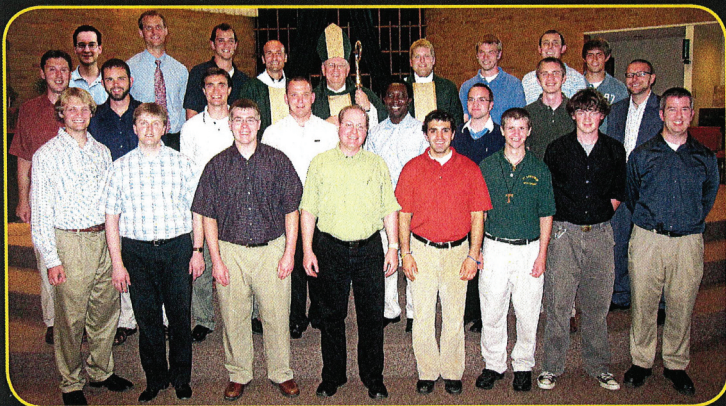


# Pray for Your Priest . . . All Priests!

## 2010-2011 Diocese of Green Bay Seminarians

*Please pray for our seminarians*

Many are called, few are chosen...



...to sacrifice and serve

Deacon Bill Brunner  
Deacon Luke Ferris  
Alvan Amadi  
Brandon Barlow  
Adam Bradley  
Eric Brandt  
Jason Hawman  
Thomas Holschuh  
Kurt Krause  
Ryan Krueger  
Patrick LaPacz  
Edward Looney  
Timothy Martins  
Gregory Parent

Matthew Rapp  
Brian Romportl  
Ryan Starks  
Michael Thiel  
Scott Valentyn  
BJ VanDinhoven  
Vincent Wagner  
Michael Warden  
Brian Wideman



Diocese of  
Green Bay



~ In Memory ~

Theresa Broderick wp – November 9, 2010

### Widows of Prayer, Inc. Board of Directors

Mary Reardon wp, President  
Natalie Raaths, Vice President  
Connie Hannemann, Secretary  
Peter Bekkers, Treasurer  
Rev. Thomas Farrell  
Germaine Doerfler wp  
Anne Ertel-Sawasky, Atty.  
Vernon Sumnicht  
Ned Woytych

### To learn more about the Widows of Prayer, call:

Appleton, WI area  
920-733-2652

Franklin & Milwaukee, WI area  
414-858-9811

Lake Villa/Chicago, IL area  
847-265-0411

Huntington, IN area  
260-356-0919

Fort Wayne, IN area  
260-749-2726

Menominee, MI area  
906-864-1972

Wind Lake, WI area  
262-895-3482

Washington, MI area

Fr. John Guimond OFM. Cap.

248-651-4826



or website

[www.widowsofprayer.org](http://www.widowsofprayer.org)

### Will You Help the Widows of Prayer?

The Widows of Prayer are growing in number with satellite communities in neighboring states and diocese. Our financial needs are growing as well.

Are you willing to support a new movement in the Church with your financial help? The Widows of Prayer is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Tax Deductible Charity. Cut off the bottom of this sheet, fill out and send along with your check to: Widows of Prayer, Inc., 1021 W. Windtree Dr., Appleton, WI 54914

Widows of Prayer Donation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to give: \$100 - \$75 - \$50 - \$25 - \$20 - \$10 - Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Any amount given will be greatly appreciated. Remember the Widows of Prayer in your will.